

SEEN IN AUCTION

Michael Millar

A rather spectacular item was in the 7th May sale of Vance Auctions. It's a Government of New Zealand official business cover posted in London 26th March 1941 sent to the Defence Services, Wellington with 18/- postage on it – a block of 6 issue Q 6d (SG 470), 5/- (SG 477) and 10/- (SG 478). Marked for airmail with “Via North Atlantic and / Pan Pacific Service” in red m/s, and “SHIPPING DOCUMENTS” stamped in dark blue in the lower left hand corner. Estimate CDN\$50 but finally sold for CDN\$375 – probably sold to an airmail specialist. The description indicated all the stamps have perfin, but whether they are NZ - N3760.01/1a or N3760.02 is not clear.



There was an airmail service between Canada and the UK during the war with mails being carried on bombers being ferried from Canada. Mails going west were carried on the aircraft that took the ferry crews back to Canada. This cover would have been carried from the UK on one of these flights but from Canada to New Zealand the route is less clear. The cover would have come into the Canadian system in Montreal and travelled from there - possibly - to Vancouver. I say possibly, as there was another route that went from Montreal to New York, then to Sao Paulo, Brazil, Cape Town, Karachi, Singapore, Sydney, and then to Auckland. The other routing went from Vancouver to San Francisco and then to Sydney via Pan American. From Sydney to New Zealand would have been via an Australian or New Zealand service. With the U. S. and Japan not yet at war in May 1941 I suspect that this would have been the routing.